

## ISO 14001 STRUCTURE AND RESPONSIBILITY (4.4.1)

In order to be in conformance with this provision of ISO 14001 an organization must be able to answer the overall question: **"Who does what?"**. In order to answer that question three specific tasks must be addressed under the Structure and Responsibility section of the standard. First, the responsibilities of each individual and unit within the organization must be defined, documented and communicated with respect to operation of the environmental management system. Second, adequate resources must be provided to support the implementation and operation of the environmental management system. Third, a specific representative of management must be assigned who has the responsibility for ensuring that the overall environmental management system conforms to ISO 14001. That individual also must report on the performance of the system.

ISO 14001 does not provide any guidance with respect to the documentation requirement within this section. It is assumed that organizational charts that specifically highlight the responsibilities of each individual and unit within the organization with respect to the environmental management system will meet this requirement. The addition of detailed position and unit descriptions and responsibilities would be a very strong reinforcement to the organization charts. In addition the development of operational plans related to addressing the specific Environmental Objectives and Targets would also be a stronger reinforcement to the organizational charts. The combination of the three above referenced items more than meets the intent of ISO 14001 that roles, responsibilities and authorities are defined and communicated.

Adequate resources must be provided to implement and maintain the environmental management system. Resources can be broken down into two basic categories: manpower and technology. Management must provide the necessary workforce to implement and maintain the environmental management system. In addition that workforce must have the appropriate level of skills to support the effort. The technology resources will be dependent upon the targets that have been established. If the deployment of new technology is required to meet a target, then it must be provided.

The third task requires that a management representative be appointed who has the responsibility and authority to perform two overall tasks. First, the management representative must ensure that the environmental management system is implemented and maintained as required by ISO 14001. Second, the management representative will need to regularly report to senior management on the performance of the environmental management system with emphasis on continual improvement.

This section of the standard underscores the importance of the intimate involvement of top management in the process of implementing and managing an environmental management system. This section of the standard requires top management to assign responsibility and authority to one or more individuals to manage, report and correct, when necessary, the overall system. Top management is also required

to supply the necessary human, financial and technical resources to foster and support the implementation and operation of the environmental management system.

#### Questions That Need To Be Answered:

The following questions will need to be answered in order to determine whether the Structure and Responsibility Section meets the intent of ISO 14001:

1. Has the organization defined the roles, responsibilities, and authorities of its employees with respect to the environmental management system?
2. Have the above been documented and communicated?
3. Have the following resources been provided to implement and maintain the system?
  - a. human resources (manpower),
  - b. special skills,
  - c. technology, and
  - d. financial resources.
4. Has a management representative been appointed?
5. Does the management representative have the following defined role:
  - a. establishing ISO 14001 requirements,
  - b. determining whether ISO 14001 requirements have been implemented,
  - c. determining whether the ISO 14001 conformance is maintained,
  - d. reporting to top management on conformance and continual improvement.